

One Page Summary of Thompson/Berkley Amendment #29

***** Ensure Access to Care for our Military and Veterans, Regardless of Location *****

Key Provisions

- Expands the current Department of Defense (DOD) state licensure exemption to allow credentialed health care professionals to work across state borders without having to obtain a new state license. This will increase access to critical health services, with no cost to the American taxpayers.
- Expands the definition of exempt health care professional to include qualified DOD civilians and personal service contractors.
- Removes the current service location requirement, to allow for care regardless of where the health care professional or patient is located.
- Requires a report within 90 days on DOD and Veteran Administration plans to develop and expand programs to use new Internet and communication technologies for improved access to telemedicine and electronic health programs.

Additional Information

- This amendment will ensure our men and women in the Armed Services do not fall through the cracks, by incorporating a common sense, zero cost, and bipartisan fix to an outdated and cumbersome procedural obstacle.
- The amendment strategically expands the already existing DOD state licensure exemption for health care professionals treating DOD patients.
- By removing this state licensure burden, we can empower the DOD to use cutting edge telemedicine and e-health applications, to treat servicemembers regardless of their physical proximity. This will allow more specialists to offer services to a wider base of DOD patients.
- Without the location requirement, individuals who need immediate behavioral health care will no longer have to drive hours or wait for care – or be faced with the social stigma – and will be able to access services from their own home quickly and easily, at the times they need it the most.
- The amendment also reaffirms the commitment Congress has made to our brave men and women, especially to our Guard, Reserve, and those in rural America, who have served our country, but have limited access to care.
- The amendment is supported by 10 major organizations, including:
 - Air Force Association
 - American Legion
 - Association of the United States Navy
 - Enlisted Association of the National Guard
 - Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America
 - Mental Health America
 - Military Officers Association of America
 - National Guard Association of the United States
 - Reserve Enlisted Association
 - Veterans of Foreign Wars